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BREWING UP A COFFEE WAR, EH

NEW PLAYERS IN CANADA'S COFFEE MARKET USE THE POWER OF PATRIOTISM TO LURE IN CUSTOMERS PAGE 7

Street unit nets record drug bust

16-year-old among those charged after London police seize $360K worth of cocaine, marijuana PAGE 2

World's oldest object landed at Western

Expert says he was emotional when he held the 4.4-billion-year-old zircon crystal in his hands PAGE 4

Lightning know their enemy

London National Basketball League club to take on Brampton A's in conference semi-final PAGE 17

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

The new performing arts centre, which includes a condo development and other aspects, would include razing Centennial Hall, vastly changing the look of the area north of city hall, shown here. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Answers to concert hall questions

Performing Arts Centre. Owners, funding and more revealed at committee

MIKE DONACHIE
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The big question was "Who are you?" and finally there was an answer.

Leaders of London's performing arts centre proposal returned to city hall Monday seeking support and, eventually, council members gave it.

But first they asked probing questions of the people who want $16 million of city funding for the $164-million development.

The short version of the answers is that the new group behind it, it turns out, is a reinvention of an old group: Performing Arts Centre, or PAC.

And the other big answer was: Yes, it might lead to Londoners' taxes going up.

For the second time in two weeks, a delegation of London's leading citizens came to ask the city to endorse their plans. Two weeks ago, councillors expressed doubts and asked staff to examine them.

Orchestra London and the Grand Theatre have combined to form this proposal, which is led by a joint task force.

It involves replacing Centennial Hall with a new Celebration Centre, plus expanding The Grand, creating two towers with condos and a hotel and establishing a wider arts district.

Private-sector partners include EllisDon, Soufan Realty and London Life. But it's all under the umbrella of Music London, a group that's designed to become the owners of the new centre.

Various speakers put forward the proposal Monday to the investment and economic prosperity committee. It asked for city support for a business plan. Each used the word "we."

But Coun. Paul Hubert asked the big question: "Who is 'we'?"

Who is Music London?, he asked. If there's a problem with its finances, who will end up holding the bag?

The answer came from London lawyer David Canton, who said the old Performing Arts Centre group, which led other arts proposals, still exists.

"Those of us in Music London are getting involved in that board," said Canton. "We may be changing the name to Music London, but there is a legal entity that is doing this."

Then there was another huge query: Where will the city get the money it's being asked to invest?

Mayor Joe Fontana fired that at city treasurer Martin Hayward, who had a simple reply: Sell an asset or raise taxes in 2015.

Coun. Paul Van Meerbergen didn't like that. He tried to change the motion before the committee, removing any reference to raising taxes, but the committee voted against it.

Another question was from Fontana: "Who antes up the first dollar?" In other words, the city isn't putting up any money until someone else does.

Developer Ali Soufan came forward to say his consortium from the property world "has put forward a note for $5 million."

In the end, the committee agreed to support the project.

But first, the task force will hire consultants to draw up a business plan looking at funding, governance and more, and the city's consultants, Novita, will examine that business plan.

NEWS 1

$360K: Police mark record cocaine, marijuana seizure

Teen, man facing multiple charges. Unit raids two homes, gets biggest 'street-level' haul in history

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A 16-year-old is among those facing charges in what London police are calling the largest cocaine seizure in the history of its street drug unit.

The young offender, who can't be identified because of his age, was arrested Friday along with 23-year-old Mustafa Hassan after police found a combined 2.9 kilograms of cocaine and six kilograms of marijuana in homes on opposite ends of the city.

The pair face charges that include producing a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance for purpose of trafficking.

"It's an extremely significant seizure" that will "certainly cause a disruption" in the stream of drugs available on London streets, Det. Sgt. Chris McCoy said.

How long that disruption will last, though, is questionable.

"Where you create a void there's always somebody willing to fill it, and that's the nature of our work," McCoy said.

Valued at $360,000, the drugs were found alongside a hydraulic press and several jars of chemicals such as procaine and lidocaine.

The chemicals are common cutting agents, tools that dilute the purity of drugs but increase the volume, yielding higher returns to the seller. Finding the press indicates the suspects might have been making bricks of cocaine to sell to mid-level dealers, officials said.

Putting the haul into context, McCoy said average day-to-day seizures by the street unit generally yield less than a kilogram of cocaine.

"If we get beyond the (kilogram) level with the officers that we have out there working (on the streets) it's a good day," he said.

Formed in 1993, the street drug unit operates out of London police headquarters and includes members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

At a glance

- The residences where the drugs were found are on Proudfoot Lane in west London and Tanner Drive on the city's east end.
- Along with the drugs, police seized a 2007 Ford F150 and a 2009 Dodge Charger, valued at a combined $24,000.
- They also found scales, cellphones and other equipment believed to have been used in the drug trade.

The quantity of drugs seized in Friday raids at two London homes overshadowed Det. Sgt. Chris McCoy as he talked about the significance Monday at police headquarters. Bags of marijuana buds alone were stacked about six inches high, and the smell was wafting through corridors. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Sign that the worst is over? Flu cases continue to drop in London area

Flu activity is on the decline in the London area, despite the report of one more death attributed to the virus.

The Middlesex-London Health Unit received only three reports of new cases last week, down from the 11 new cases reported from Feb. 10 to 16.

Since the flu season started in September, the health unit has seen 192 cases, the majority of which — 62 per cent — have affected adults ages 20 to 64. Seven deaths have been reported, including the new one last week.

Trending downward

The number of flu cases dropped in mid-January, and, minus a small spike in early February, has been declining ever since.

The flu appears to have hit London the hardest in late December and early January with 105 cases reported between Dec. 22 and Jan. 11. METRO

High-tech help for Fanshawe students in mobile device lab

The downtown campus of Fanshawe College just added some new tools to its belt.

Thanks to a new partnership with TechAlliance, students will be able to use smartphones and tablets in the school's new mobile device lab. And TechAlliance, which helps businesses in the technology sector grow, will be providing students access to business advisers and industry leaders.

The hope is that the support will help contemporary media students develop mobile applications and other projects, then find ways to turn them into businesses — all without leaving the classroom.

"The mobile device lab is a great new resource that will benefit Fanshawe's students, and the tech community as a whole," said TechAlliance president and CEO Marilyn Sinclair.

The guidance will be provided by TechAlliance's startup services team, taking students through idea development, business model reviews and commercialization.

There will also be access to funding opportunities and strategic partnerships.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Entrepreneurship

"Our new collaboration will make it easier for student entrepreneurs to start companies, create jobs and boost the city's economy."

TechAlliance president and CEO Marilyn Sinclair on the company's partnership with Fanshawe College

Local families take case for new school to the province

Summerside. Parents want to see a new school built in east London

Families leading the charge for a new school in Summerside are taking their fight to the province.

Allison Martin, a parent and president of the Summerside Optimists, said she's contacted London-Fanshawe MPP Teresa Armstrong to see if the education ministry might be able to help.

"The (Thames Valley) school board is saying their hands are tied," Martin said.

At the same time, "they completely, 100 per cent acknowledge that if they built a school in Summerside they would have enough kids to fill it," she added.

Martin and other residents were on hand last week at a meeting that included representatives from the city and the school board.

Before the TVDSB can apply for funding to build a new school, 400 students from Summerside need to be enrolled in the district.

But, as residents found out last week, only about 300 of the 770 school-age kids in the neighbourhood attend schools within the board. The remainder have chosen to attend Catholic or French schools.

Right now, elementary school kids who live in Summerside are sent to one of three Thames Valley schools: Princess Elizabeth, Tweedsmuir and Fairmont. High school students go to Clarke Road.

The school board's suggestion that residents campaign to have their neighbours enroll in Thames Valley to meet the 400-student quota doesn't seem like a viable solution, Martin said.

"I think it's really unfair to ask parents to place their kids in a school that they are uncomfortable with for at least three years on an off chance that a school will be built," Martin said. "I think it would be a really hard sell for parents."

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Where it's at

- Summerside is in southeast London, east of Highbury and Commissioners.
- Residents want the Thames Valley District School Board to build a new school on a site set aside on Meadowgate Boulevard.

Big chili cook-off doesn't go in favour of Mayor Joe Fontana

It may have been a delicious endeavour, but a big chili contest didn't go Mayor Joe Fontana's way on Monday. The fundraiser for Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU), which supports young people who are looking for work, saw Fontana's chili recipe compete with creations by two other chefs. The judges' choice was broadcaster and Masterchef contestant Andrew Lawton, while the public's choice — indicated by donations in the right jar at the You Made It Café on Richmond Street — was the café's own chef, Ricardo Cavaco. The total raised was more than $1,000. From left, Lawton, Fontana and Cavaco. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Opportunities. Business world reaches out to London students

More than 500 students from seven post-secondary campuses will learn how to do business next month.

The big event is Student 2 Business, and it's presented by organizations including the London Economic Development Corp., Fanshawe College and Western University.

It's a chance for students who want to enter the business world to have a glimpse of it first.

It all happens on March 5 at the London Convention Centre with transportation provided from Fanshawe and Western. Visit s2b.ca for more information.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

The Gathering Place. Fundraiser to support new centre in the city

More than 400 tickets have been sold for a 50th anniversary fundraiser planned for Friday.

L'Arche London is to host hundreds at its banquet at the London Convention Centre starting at 5:15 p.m. It's $50 per ticket, or $340 for a table of eight, so reaching 400 tickets sold is good news for the charity.

L'Arche is the local arm of a charity founded in France in 1964. The London branch was set up in 1997 and has three residential homes providing care for adults who have intellectual disabilities.

To join the fundraiser, visit larchelondon.org.

METRO

Not ready for election yet. NDP support Liberals as confidence votes near

Ontario's New Democrats aren't ready to force a provincial election just yet, despite pleas from the Progressive Conservatives to stop propping up the minority Liberals.

The Liberals face two confidence votes this week on routine housekeeping bills, but the NDP said it will help keep the government in power, at least until the vote on the spring budget.

The Liberals introduced an Interim Supply motion, which allows the government to pay the bills in the fiscal year starting April 1, along with another motion known as the Concurrence of Estimates. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Desmond Moser had the oldest thing in the world in his ZAPLab at Western University. CONTRIBUTED

Pink, packaged — and ancient beyond human understanding

Western University. London expert makes key contribution to incredible discovery

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The oldest thing in the world is 4.4 billion years old and briefly visited London, scientists announced Monday.

However, it didn't arrive in style by spacecraft. It came by FedEx. And it was pale pink.

The discovery of the oldest thing in the world has been grabbing attention across the planet. It's a rare sample of zircon crystal found in Australia in 2001 by the University of Wisconsin's John Valley.

The sample has been dated by an international team of investigators that includes Desmond Moser of Western University, who acknowledged he felt emotional when he found himself holding the oldest thing in the world.

"That's a special moment," he said Monday. "We also work on the same crystals that come from outer space, from meteorites. They come from Mars and nearby planets."

But such an important item isn't easy to find. The sample of zircon, though similar to something that might be found on a beach, can only be seen with a magnifying glass, said Moser.

"(Valley) FedExed it to us here in London," said Moser. "We very carefully unwrapped it, polished it and analyzed it with some very special equipment that we have here.

"When we returned it, we tracked it hour by hour. It's a very special piece of the Earth."

Hallowed remnant

"It's a very deep experience to be in contact with something that's the oldest surviving piece of the planet that we know of."
Desmond Moser of Western University

ZAPLab

World's first atom-probe of a crystal

Desmond Moser's Zircon and Accessory Phase Laboratory (ZAPLab) in the Department of Earth Sciences has special equipment for examining the damage in crystals, so he was able to identify the best-preserved parts of the sample.

It was then sent back to the U.S. for the world's first "atom-probe" study of a crystal, meaning its fundamental structure was examined. Its uranium and lead atoms were used to date the crystal at 4.4 billion years old.

The sample was formed shortly after Earth's first crust crystallized. Before that, it was red-hot magma.

The research suggests the planet could have supported life earlier than previously believed.

Budget's back — and this time it's inescapable

They're rolling up their sleeves at city hall because it's time to duke it out.

If it's to meet its self-imposed deadline, council must decide on the city budget by Thursday. It's getting close but, as the debates have raged and the amendments to amendments have been amended then deferred, it has seemed so very far away.

With Mayor Joe Fontana determined to keep any property tax increase low — or non-existent — the process is sitting at a 3.6 per cent hike, based on agreed spending so far. But it's unlikely politicians will leave it at that.

On the table

3.6%

The property tax increase needed to balance the budget unless council makes more cuts or finds more revenue

This week the real cuts will start to hit, as services are examined closely during meetings that start Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.

One flashpoint is the police budget. Chief Brad Duncan's due to return Tuesday with more information about his requested increase of 3.3 per cent. He'll also outline what kind of cuts will be made if he's denied.

And, with some past votes on the police budget deadlocked at 7-7, the return of Coun. Dale Henderson after a hospital stay will also have an effect. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Free talk

Architecture lecture returns

The London Society of Architects is trying to bring a little structure to the city through a lecture series.

The series started two years ago and originally celebrated the work being done locally but now includes architects from across Canada.

Speaking Thursday at Museum London are Merike and Stephen Bauer, partners at Reigo and Bauer, a firm focused primarily on the residential market. METRO

Broadway in London

Midtown Men come downtown on April 23rd

Budweiser Gardens will be swinging and rocking this spring with classic music from the 1960s.

The Midtown Men, part of the Broadway in London series, will take to the RBC Theatre stage on April 23, starring four members from the original Broadway cast of Jersey Boys.

Tickets are on sale now and range in price from $50 to $60, plus service charges. METRO

Douglas Porter

Canadian Club to welcome big numbers man

Economist Douglas Porter will be the next expert speaking to Canadian Club of London members over breakfast.

The chief economist for BMO Capital Markets is in town on Thursday.

Porter is a native of London and a graduate of Western University.

Known for his wry sense of humour, Porter's talk promises to entertain when he hits the Hilton at 30 King St. METRO

Province launches legislation for calorie counts on menus

New rules. Law would require caloric values displayed next to prices

Ontario could become the first province in Canada to force big chain restaurants, convenience stores and grocery stores to post calorie counts on all their menus in a bid to fight the growing problem of obesity.

Draft legislation would require places that sell meals for immediate consumption to display the calories in food and drinks, including alcohol, right next to the price, Health Minister Deb Matthews said Monday.

Consumers think they're making healthy choices, not realizing that it's actually the opposite, she said.

A raisin bran muffin at Tim Hortons, for example, has more calories than a cheeseburger, Matthews said. Some blended coffee beverages contain about a third of the calories adults are supposed to consume in a day.

"I think when people start to realize that, they'll make different choices, and the restaurants will also make different choices. They'll rethink what's on their menu and what's in their recipes," she said.

Ontario would require restaurants to also post a statement about daily caloric requirements to put the numbers in context, she said. The rules would only apply to businesses that belong to a chain with 20 or more locations in the province.

But they wouldn't have to display the sodium content, which some experts argue is equally important because it's associated with serious illnesses such as heart disease.

Matthews said the draft law can be changed in the future, but right now, it's about making things easier for consumers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ontario may be the first province in Canada to tackle calorie counts on menus. However, restaurants elsewhere, like the one shown here in New York, have been posting their numbers for years. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Chrysler. Liberals should refuse to pay 'ransom' money, Hudak says

Ontario's Liberal government should refuse to give Chrysler hundreds of millions of dollars in "ransom" money and end its $3 billion a year "corporate welfare" program, Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak charged Monday.

Chrysler still owes the province $800 million from the bailout it received during the recession in 2009, and should not try to blackmail the federal and Ontario governments for a reported $700 million, part of a $3.6-billion investment in its plants in Windsor and Brampton, said Hudak.

"Should we pay a nine figure ransom to Chrysler? Of course not," he said. "We should use the money to lower taxes for all, so all companies can create jobs, instead of giving handouts to the very few."

Asked why he was using such harsh language about a large auto company that employs thousands of Ontario workers, Hudak insisted he wasn't attacking Chrysler.

Tim Hudak TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

"I don't blame the corporations for chasing the handouts," he said. "I blame the Liberal government for being in the handout business.

Premier Kathleen Wynne called Hudak "irresponsible" and accused the Conservative leader of abandoning Ontario's automotive manufacturing sector.

"Tim Hudak's vision of Ontario apparently doesn't include the auto sector," she said. "I think it's naive to suggest that any Ontario government wouldn't have to work with the auto sector to help them to make the investments that would make them globally competitive."

Wynne said Ontario knows Chrysler is talking with other governments that will also offer the automaker incentives to locate in their state or country. THE CANADIAN PRESS

University equals jobs: Report

Barista, shmarrista.

Ontario university grads have the best odds of landing jobs in their fields at good wages, according to a feisty new report from the Council of Ontario Universities.

The 30-page University Works, disputes any notion its members are glorified prep schools for a life making lattes. It argues that university grads, sometimes painted as lacking marketable skills, have actually been more recession-proof, more destined for jobs in their field and more likely to draw higher salaries than those with any other credential, including community college.

"We're pushing back against quite a number of articles and opinion pieces lately that characterize university education as less than successful preparation for the job market. You know the line about the grad asking, 'Would you like a cappuccino with that?'" said Max Blouw, president of Wilfrid Laurier University and chair of the Council of Ontario Universities.

Students in 23 university disciplines boast a 90 per cent employment rate within two years of graduation, notes the report, and a full 100 per cent are employed in dentistry, pharmacy, forestry, veterinary medicine and theology.

But it argued university grads are more likely to get jobs in their field than those from community college, where job placement has long been a bragging right.

By analyzing the wording of graduate surveys done by each group — colleges and universities — the report concluded 73 per cent of university grads are working in fields "closely or somewhat related" to their studies within six months, compared to just 66 per cent of community college grads. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"We're bringing evidence to the table that university education pays off quite well."

Max Blouw, chair of the Council of Ontario Universities

On to great things? Students are generally all smiles when they receive their diplomas from Western University, and a new report from the group representing Ontario universities says the grads are in the right frame of mind. METRO FILE

People lay down flowers at one of the streets leading to Independence Square in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Monday. Ukraine's acting government issued a warrant Monday for the arrest of President Viktor Yanukovych, accusing him of mass crimes against protesters who stood up against his rule. EFREM LUKATSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine issues arrest warrant for ousted leader

Kyiv. Derided by Russia as gun-toting thugs, new leaders move swiftly to open dialogue with West

With Viktor Yanukovych on the run, Ukraine's interim government drew up a warrant Monday for the fugitive president's arrest in the killing of anti-government protesters last week, while Russia issued its strongest condemnation yet of the new leaders in Kyiv, deriding them as "Kalashnikov-toting people in black masks."

Parliament speaker Oleksandr Turchinov, the interim president, moved quickly to open a dialogue with the West, saying at a meeting with EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton that the course toward closer integration with Europe and financial assistance from the EU were "key factors of stable and democratic development of Ukraine."

Yanukovych, who fled Kyiv on Saturday after the opposition took over government buildings, has reportedly gone to the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea, a pro-Russia area.

Calls are mounting to put Yanukovych on trial after a tumultuous presidency in which he amassed powers, enriched his allies and family, and cracked down on protesters.

Acting Interior Minister Arsen Avakhov said on his official Facebook page that a warrant has been issued for the arrest of Yanukovych and several other officials for the "mass killing of civilians."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine no 'laughing matter'

Trudeau slammed for hockey quip

The Conservatives took aim at Justin Trudeau on Monday for his tongue-in-cheek weekend remarks linking the upheaval in Ukraine to Russia's Olympic hockey humiliation.

"So Justin Trudeau … thinks the deadly crisis in Ukraine is a laughing matter," Employment Minister Jason Kenney tweeted.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Manitoba

Greyhound killer should have more freedom, says psychiatrist

A doctor is suggesting that a man who beheaded a passenger on a Manitoba Greyhound bus should get more freedom.

Vince Li's psychiatrist is asking the Criminal Code Review Board to let Li have unescorted day trips to Selkirk, Man.

Dr. Stephen Kremer says Li should also be moved out of a locked ward and onto an unlocked ward at the Selkirk Mental Health Centre. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Election Act changes

NDP, Liberals push for hearings

The NDP is accusing the governing Conservatives of trying to rig Canada's election rules while clouding criticism of the changes as just another Ottawa battle.

The NDP, backed by the Liberals, wants hearings held across the country on proposed changes to the Elections Act.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Surprise move. Egypt Cabinet resigns, could pave the way for el-Sissi

Egypt's interim Cabinet resigned Monday in a surprise move that could pave the way for the nation's military chief Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi to announce his widely anticipated plans to run for president in the spring.

The resignation, announced by Prime Minister Hazem el-Beblawi in a televised statement, came amid a wave of labour strikes over the government's failure to fix the economy and rising popular anger nearly a year after Islamist President Mohammed Morsi was ousted by the military.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Changes

The Cabinet will remain in office in a caretaking capacity until a new one is formed.

- El-Sissi has already secured the support of Egypt's military body to seek the presidency.

C. African Republic

Muslims killed in rural massacre

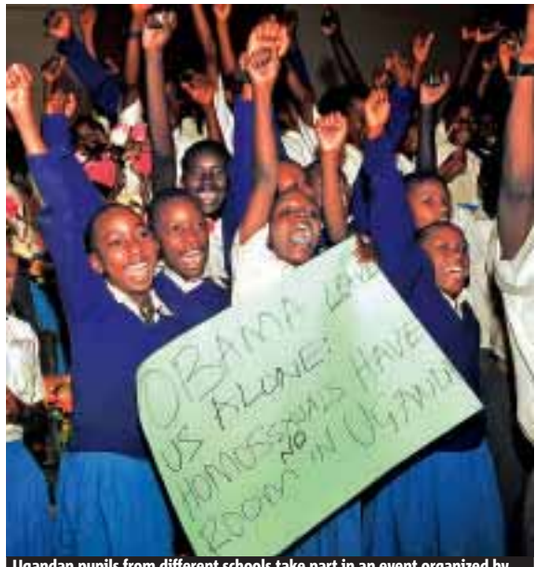
Christian militiamen killed at least 70 people in the remote southwest of Central African Republic, at one point ordering a group of Muslims to lie on the ground and shooting them one by one, witnesses said Monday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Congo

Militia attacks displace thousands

The U.N. says 400,000 people have been displaced in recent months by fighting involving local militia groups in Congo's mineral-rich southeast Katanga province. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Uganda signs anti-gay bill into law in defiance of West



Ugandan pupils from different schools take part in an event organized by born-again Christians to celebrate the signing of a new anti-gay bill that sets harsh penalties for homosexual sex, at the Omega Healing Centre outside of Kampala, Uganda on Monday. STEPHEN WANDERA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Uganda's president on Monday signed an anti-gay bill that punishes gay sex with up to life in prison, a measure likely to send Uganda's beleaguered gay community further underground as the police try to implement it amid fevered anti-gay sentiment across the country.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said the bill, which goes into effect immediately, was needed because the West is promoting homosexuality in Africa.

Museveni may have defied Western pressure to shelve the bill, four years and many versions after it was introduced, but his move — likely to galvanize support ahead of presidential elections — pleased many Ugandans, who repeatedly urged him to sign the legislation.

Nigeria's president similarly signed an anti-gay bill into law just over a month ago, sparking increased violence against gays who already were persecuted in mob attacks.

Some watchdog groups warn a similar backlash of violence may occur in Uganda.

"Experience from other jurisdictions with similarly draconian laws, such as Nigeria or Russia, indicates that their implementation is often followed by a surge in violence against individuals thought to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender," the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission said in a statement Monday.

"The Ugandan government has not indicated any plans to counter such violence or to investigate potential allegations of abuse."

In Washington, White House press secretary Jay Carney called the law "abhorrent," urged its repeal and said the White House is reviewing its relationship with Uganda.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Coffee wars brewing from coast-to-coast

Joe drama. The once seemingly indomitable Tim Hortons is facing a big push from rivals McDonald's, Starbucks

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On the ice, Tim Horton was known to dole out "Horton hugs," squeezing his rivals until they couldn't breathe.

Now, 50 years after Horton opened his first coffee shop, Tim Hortons Inc. execs will need to channel its founder's defensive style as it prepares to hit back in an increasingly crowded market.

Although Tim Hortons still dominates the Canadian coffee market, holding just over 75 per cent of it with about 3,500 outlets in Canada, the company recently missed analysts' profit expectations for 2013. On Tuesday, Tim's will unveil its plan to squeeze key players like McDonald's McCafé and Starbucks, which have dropped the gloves in the fight for java supremacy.

When Tim's opened its first store in Hamilton in May 1964, it had the arena to itself, said Douglas Hunter, who has written books on both Horton and Hortons.

"Tim's could expand easily, move right next to McDonald's and it didn't matter, they were selling different products."

It matters now.

McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd. is aggressively going after longtime Tim's fans.

In 2007, the burger giant jolted its competitors by winning a Consumer Reports taste test. When the Golden Arches launched McCafé in Canada in 2009, it gave away its coffee for free. McD's aggressive game has reaped rewards: it has doubled its market share here to about 10 per cent in under five years.

This week customers can get a free coffee in a sleek brown-and-white cup at one of McDonald's almost 1,500 outposts in Canada. But free java will not sway Yasha Grey, a 25-year-old master's student in St. Catharines, Ont., who usually orders a single-single (one cream, one sugar), coming in a Tim's iconic red-and-yellow Roll Up the Rim to Win cup these days.

"It may sound cheesy, but I really like that Tim Hortons is Canadian," Grey said. "I like its homey, country feel."

Cheesy or not, serving up a side of Canadiana works.

The power of patriotism is now percolating over at Starbucks Canada. The world java juggernaut first came to Canada in 1987 with a single outlet in Vancouver. It now has more than 1,000 outlets here and will open about 100 more this year. Its baristas now pour a Canada-only brew named True North into minimalist green-and-white cups. And, as we enter maple-syrup season, Starbucks is unveiling the Maple Macchiato next week.

While Timothy's Coffees of the World Inc. and The Second Cup Ltd. opened their doors in Canada 12 years before Starbucks, they have not been able to maintain their head start.

By the numbers

$898M

Tim Hortons reported it had earned $898.5 million in revenue during the fourth quarter, up 10.7 per cent from a year earlier, but a smaller profit than analysts were expecting.

Timothy's grew from one store in London to about 139 in 2009. It is down to about 100 stores after its wholesale and retail businesses were spun off and sold to U.S. companies.

Second Cup started as a kiosk in a Toronto mall and now has about 350 cafés. It dropped its CEO late last year after it posted a loss of $8.5 million. But the chain is mounting a comeback under Alix Box, who once worked as an executive at Starbucks and officially took the reins Monday.

Unlike its smaller Canadian compatriots, Tim's has been able to stay ahead of international competitors so far.

But to some, the chain is starting to taste stale and needs to brew up a fresh pot of business fast.

"We are moving into a different era. The baby boomers Tim's has relied on are getting older," said Douglas Stephens, a leading retail analyst based in Toronto.

In a bid to attract baby boomers' kids and grandkids, all coffee sellers must hatch bold strategies.

We love coffee, with a whopping 65 per cent of us drinking it daily, according to a study by the Coffee Association of Canada, but changing demographics mean changing tastes.

Millennials demand that products be healthy and ethically sourced. Oh, and also cheap. And many new Canadians don't even drink coffee, opting for tea instead, noted Stephens.

Like the real Horton, Tim Hortons' top brass will have to mount a strong defence if the chain is to remain the top player in the good ol' coffee game.

At-home

The coffee pot has gone to pod

Pots are out, pods are in.

"In the at-home category, single-serve machines have been a category disruptive phenomenon," said Sandy McAlpine, head of the Coffee Association of Canada.

Keurig, Tassimo and Nespresso currently dominate the market, said McAlpine.

The focus of Tim Hortons, McDonald's and Starbucks is take-out brew, but the at-home market can't be ignored.

Just over half of Canadians make their cuppa at home daily, while only 24 per cent buy takeout every day, noted McAlpine.

In response, Tim's announced last week it will expand its Keurig K-discs and Tassimo T-discs to grocery-store shelves later this year. McD's, under its McCafé brand, has teamed up with Kraft and will test selling pods in U.S. grocery stores soon. Starbucks opted to launch its own machine and pods, called Verismo, in its Canadian stores in late 2012.

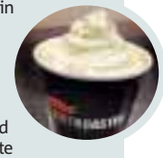
Pods have certainly perked up the home market, and the takeout coffee champs have all set their sights on adding some at-home fans to their base.

Hipster havens

Here are some top independent coffee shops across Canada luring hipsters away from Starbucks, Tim Hortons and McDonald's.

- **Vancouver.** JJ Bean: Established in 1996; 15 locations, as of March; its specialties are the cappuccino and vegan-friendly Very Berry Muffin.
- **Calgary.** Caffè Artigiano: Established in 2000; 12 locations in Western Canada; its specialty is the cappuccino (espresso, milk and foam).

- **Edmonton.** Leva: Established in 2003; one location; its specialties are the cappuccino and croissants.
- **Regina.** Atlantis Coffee: Established in 2000; one location; its specialties are the cappuccino and Prairie Cherry Scone.
- **Winnipeg.** Parlour Coffee: Established in 2011; one location; its specialties are wet-foam cappuccinos (flat white) and pour-over coffees.
- **Saskatoon.** Collective Coffee: Established in 2011; its specialties are artisan espresso and single-origin coffee.
- **London.** The Fire Roasted Coffee Co.: Established in 2013; two locations; its specialty is El Toro Bravo, an espresso and hot chocolate latte made with real chocolate.



- **Toronto.** Sam James Coffee Bar: Established in 2009; three locations; its specialty is the cappuccino.

- **Ottawa.** Bridgehead: Established in 2000; 15 locations; its specialties are the cappuccino and Morning Bun.
- **Halifax.** Two If By Sea Café: Established in 2009; two locations; its specialties are chocolate croissants and drip coffee.

Market Minute

DOLLAR 90.36¢ (+0.54¢)

TSX 14,227.08 (+ 21.36)

OIL $102.82 US (+$0.62)

GOLD $1,338 US (+$14.40)

Natural gas: $5.47 US (-$1.17)
Dow Jones: 16,209.13 (+ 105.83)

Only in America.
McMuffin vs. Waffle Taco in breakfast smackdown

Egg McMuffin, meet the Waffle Taco.

Taco Bell is readying for the launch of its national breakfast menu in the U.S. on March 27, with items such as the A.M. Crunchwrap designed to appeal to its fan base of younger men. And the chain says breakfast will be available until 11 a.m. — a half hour longer than McDonald's offers its Egg McMuffins.

"We can turn the breakfast conversation into a two horse race," Taco Bell president Brian Niccol said in an interview, noting that Taco Bell intends to be a "strong number two" after McDonald's in America.

McDonald's has long been the fast-food leader in the mornings in the U.S., with its popular Sausage Biscuits, Hotcakes and other items pulling in roughly 20 per cent of the company's U.S. sales. But the chain has been facing stiffer competition in recent years, with competitors such as Starbucks and Subway rolling out breakfast sandwiches as well.

It's not clear how Taco Bell's entry into breakfast will alter the fast-food landscape. Last year, an executive with Taco Bell's parent company Yum Brands said that breakfast accounted for about four per cent of sales in locations where it was tested. But that was before the chain put its full marketing might behind the menu, he noted.

McDonald's, which has more than 14,000 U.S. locations, has also said it plans to step up its marketing of breakfast this year as it faces intensifying competition. The president of McDonald's USA, Jeff Stratton, also told The Associated Press that the chain is in the early stages of looking at whether it can extend its breakfast hours.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Latest offerings

Sony 'stands on shoulders' of older products

Sony is borrowing innovations from its audio and camcorder businesses and incorporating its new Xperia Z2 smartphone with noise-cancelling technology and ultra-high-definition video recording.

Noise cancellation works with an in-ear headset sold separately for 60 euros ($82 US), while the Z2's built-in camera can capture video in so-called 4K resolution, an emerging technology that offers four times the details as current high-definition video.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Voice service coming

Hey, what's up? Talk with pals via WhatsApp soon

WhatsApp, the popular messaging service for smartphones acquired by Facebook, will soon be offering a voice service.

CEO Jan Koum said the voice service will be deployed for Android and iPhones this spring, with BlackBerry and Microsoft and Nokia phones coming later.

"We are going to introduce voice in WhatsApp in the second quarter of this year," Koum said at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, Spain.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

As the sun sets on the Sochi 2014 Winter Games in Russia, the future is uncertain. For the host cities the real challenge begins with the end of the Olympics. Here's a look at what some past Summer and Winter Games sites around the world look like post-Olympics.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AMEL EMRIC/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sarajevo, Bosnia: Gone downhill

Wartime destruction and negligence have turned most of Sarajevo's 1984 Winter Olympic venues into painful reminders of the city's golden times.

Vancouver: On track, so far

All games venues from the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver remain in use, with local authorities funding a $110 million trust to make sure that they don't fall into disrepair.

CHRIS CARLSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Atlanta: Home of the Braves

After the 1996 games, the Olympics stadium in Atlanta was converted into Turner Field, the baseball stadium that's been home to the Atlanta Braves for the past several years.

RIC FELD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nagano, Japan: David and Goliaths

In Nagano, Japan, a city with a population of just 387,000, five large structures were built for the 1998 Winter Games. They are in use, but many say the venues are too big and costly to maintain for the size of the town.

KYODO NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DON'T BE AFRAID TO FALL

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

My generation grew up in an age of motivational posters and boom-time optimism. My parents, for better or worse, always tried to nurture my specialness and asserted that I could achieve absolutely anything I set my mind to. But for the large majority of us that simply isn't true and these high expectations can lead to a great deal of disappointment.

And it's not just overly entitled millennials who are faced with the challenges of overcoming rejection. Every day romances end, job applications are tossed in the recycling bin and hopeful young athletes are cut from the team.

Some forms of rejection are subtle and relatively inconsequential; you'll never really know if someone swipes to the left on your Tinder profile or one of your countless Twitter connections decides to unfollow you. But it's hard not to feel crushed when you're passed over for a promotion or a landlord picks someone else for that perfect apartment.

In fact, the sting of being snubbed actually hurts in much the same way as physical distress. In a 2011 study at the University of Michigan, researchers used a functional MRI machine to measure our brain's reaction to social rejection compared to simulated bodily pain. The researchers found that asking participants to recall their feelings about a bad breakup activated the same region of the brain that processes physical discomfort.

If hurt feelings can actually translate into the ache of a broken bone then logic would suggest that popping a couple of pain killers might help relieve the anguish of being rebuffed (at least temporarily). However, rather than doubling down on painkillers, we're probably better off reconditioning ourselves to process our emotions in a more positive and constructive way.

It's easy to dwell on moments of rejection and allow those feelings of inadequacy to chip away at your self-esteem. But attacking yourself when you're already down is like rubbing lemon juice into a paper cut. Concentrating on why you're not good enough for your dream job or blaming yourself for a failed relationship makes it difficult to stabilize your emotions and get past the pain. If we instead focus on reconstructing these negative experiences as opportunities for personal growth, we're more likely to recover faster and move forward.

It's important to remember that some of the most successful people in the world fail the greatest amount, not because they're hopeless but because they allow themselves to be vulnerable and go after possibilities even though they've failed in the past.

If you try to avoid rejection at all costs in order to protect your fragile ego, you'll avoid getting hurt by potentially bad experiences but you'll also miss out on plenty of positive ones too. Getting out of your comfort zone and risking failure is a success in itself because even if you're doing something wrong, at least you're doing something.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

They've entered the matrix

COURTESY NUMEN/FOR USE

Geometric cube is artsy jungle gym

These climbers are learning the ropes of how to scale a 3D grid. Designed by Croatian-Austrian collective Numen/For Use, String Prototype is an inflatable jungle gym-meets-interactive art site that contains a network of interlocking cables, allowing intrepid visitors to explore inside a large-scale white cube. **METRO**

The cube stands at eight-metres high and six-metres wide.
COURTESY NUMEN/FOR USE

Ropes tight enough to hold people

When the cube deflates, the ropes become loose, allowing the installation to decompress. When inflated, the ropes tighten themselves into a grid strong enough to support the weight of children and adults alike. **METRO**

Clickbait

LUKE SIMCOE
Metro Online

With the advent of Siri for iPhone and Google Now for Android, we were empowered to talk to our mobile phones. Almost immediately, they began to talk back. Both Apple and Google have loaded their voice search programs with fun, often hilarious Easter eggs. To check some of them out, ask your phone a few of these questions.

ISTOCKIMAGES

Android:

- "Make me a sandwich."
- "Beam me up, Scotty."
- "Who are you?"
- "When am I?"
- "What does the fox say?"

iPhone:

- "Will you marry me?"
- "Mirror mirror on the wall who's the fairest of them all?"
- "Siri, can you open the pod bay doors?"

Twitter

@metropicks asked: A court orders TekSavvy to name downloaders. What would you do if you were asked to pay piracy damages?

@thebellguy: Request refunds for all the terrible movies I've paid for first

@Canucklehead_ca: Ye lice-infested swine! I only be downloading a single movie: "Booty and the Beast". To ERR is human ... to ARR is pirate!

@UnfunnyTweeter: I'd tell them they could have it all and then draw them a hidden treasure map. Yaarrrr.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

Comments

RE: Students Embrace Our Golden Moment, Watch Canadian Women Beat U.S. In Olympic Hockey, published Feb. 20

No wonder students are ill prepared for the real world in this day. Instead of watching TV at school they should be learning math.
Bucket of Chicken posted to metronews.ca

This is part of our culture, students should be able to celebrate Canada's achievements. I'm proud that I can say I was able to see first hand this part of history. Sincerely, Caledonia Student
PS. I had math in the morning.
Bucket_of_Awesome posted to metronews.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: londonletters@metronews.ca

metro

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DVD review

Gravity

Director. Alfonso Cuarón

Stars. Sandra Bullock, George Clooney

Not since 2001: A Space Odyssey has a film so vividly and realistically transmitted the feeling of being lost in space. Alfonso Cuarón's 3D film captures the deepest blues of Earth and the midnight hues of space, powerfully affecting the senses. High above the blue planet, slowly revealed in widescreen splendor by Emmanuel Lubezki's intoxicating camerawork, two spacewalking shuttle astronauts defy a vacuum and also expectations — and then calamity strikes. A leading contender for best picture at the March 2 Academy Awards, the film also works on a purely emotional level. Sandra Bullock and George Clooney convincingly depict the plight of space travellers facing dwindling oxygen and rescue prospects. Gravity isn't sci-fi. It's a sky high. **PETER HOWELL**

Hollywood

Harold Ramis GETTY IMAGES FILE

Ghostbusters star Harold Ramis dies

Comedy actor, director and writer Harold Ramis, best known for his roles in movies such as Ghostbusters and Stripes, has died at his suburban Chicago home after a four-year battle with an autoimmune disease, his talent agency said. Ramis, 69, died early Monday morning of complications from vasculitis. Ramis was a key factor in some of the biggest blockbuster comedies in the 1970s and 1980s.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dust off your bikes and fight for your vegan rights

Portlandia is back. The quirky sketch comedy kicks off its fourth season with a Steve Buscemi bit on the plight of celery

PAT HEALY
Metro World News in Boston

Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein are set to bring you another season of Portlandia. AUGUSTA QUIRK/IFC

Over the past three seasons of Portlandia, Fred Armisen, Carrie Brownstein and director Jonathan Krisel have perfected a revolutionary recipe that marries music and comedy with utter absurdity. The fourth season, which premieres next week, furthers their cause, especially with a sketch called The Celery Incident, which has already gone live online.

In the sketch, Steve Buscemi plays a sales representative for celery, desperately trying to compete against other vegetable salesmen who have had recent fantastical, unlikely success with veggies like kale and Brussels sprouts.

"I think Celery embodies — even though it's more genre-specific than some of our other sketches — I think it really embodies the traits of the show that I think are the most successful," says Brownstein, "which is taking a relatable, sometimes timely premise and veering into the absurd, and then hopefully veering even more into surreality, and then somewhere at the heart of this, having some relatable characters that are suffering through genuine and authentic relationship issues."

Just because they use familiar ingredients for their recipe doesn't mean the show is formulaic. Yes, you will see a lot of the characters you've seen in the previous three seasons, but in preposterous situations: Candace and Toni, the owners of Women and Women First bookstore, host a car wash fundraiser; Lance and Nina — Brownstein and Armisen's gender-swapping couple — find themselves in conflict with Jeff Goldblum's mattress salesman over a certain claim he has made that casts everything Lance stands for into doubt.

"We'll have pictures of the characters on a bulletin board and we'll have an idea for something," says Armisen, "and then we kind of shift the idea to each character, like, 'I wonder if they would be good for this?' And then eventually it will just resonate right away, and you'll know it's perfect for a set of characters."

Watch it

- Portlandia season 4 airs on Superchannel starting March 3; see superchannel.ca for air times. Seasons 1 and 2 are available on Netflix.

With such a winning formula, it's understandable that the Portlandia peeps would be protective of what they've created.

"We have worked for four seasons to make this world that feels a little bit specific and strange and hyper-real," says Brownstein. "So we try to keep that world magic and special, but of course in the meantime we have had people from SNL and friends on. There's definitely an open-door policy, as long as it feels germane and doesn't feel conspicuous to have things cross over."

We'd be remiss not asking Armisen if he thought there would be any crossover with his new role as bandleader for Late Night with Seth Meyers, but when it comes to inheriting Questlove's seat, he suddenly turns even more protective.

"I don't want to talk about it," he says, shifting the tone of the conversation into uncomfortable territory. "That's something for my friend Seth and it's fun and I don't want to talk about it because this is about Portlandia and Carrie is on the other line."

He will allow, however, that he's going to be able to take time off to work on Portlandia. "It will be perfect," he says, with a little less attitude. "My focus is Portlandia. That's what I do."

CNN axes Morgan on poor ratings

CNN's prime-time talk show Piers Morgan Live is coming to an end, the news channel says.

Morgan, who succeeded Larry King three years ago, was drawing lacklustre ratings. In contrast, King had a 25-year run on CNN.

The airdate for Morgan's last show has yet to be determined, CNN said in a statement.

Morgan is a former U.K. tabloid editor who reinvented himself as a TV personality with stints as a judge on Britain's Got Talent and its U.S. spinoff, NBC's America's Got Talent, and as a contestant on Celebrity Apprentice.

He hosted BBC's You Can't Fire Me, I'm Famous, and did interview shows and documentaries for ITV.

Morgan told The New York Times that his show lately has "taken a bath in the ratings" but that he and CNN President Jeff Zucker were discussing a new role for him at the channel. CNN's audience has tired of hearing a Brit weigh in on American cultural issues, Morgan said in a story posted online Sunday.

Morgan's future with CNN is undetermined, the channel said.

Last fall, the already struggling Piers Morgan Live faced increased competition from a revised Fox News Channel lineup that included a strong new performer at 9 p.m. EST with Megyn Kelly's The Kelly File.

Morgan served as editor of The Daily Mirror from 1995 to 2004. He has been questioned in connection with Britain's long-running phone hacking scandal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Piers Morgan THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Sam Worthington ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

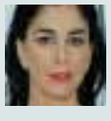
Avatar star Worthington punched photographer who 'kicked' his girlfriend

Avatar star Sam Worthington was arrested in New York over the weekend for allegedly punching a photographer during an altercation outside a Greenwich Village bar, according to Radar Online. Law enforcement sources say the Australian actor was coming to the aid of girlfriend Lara Bingle. "The photographer kicked Lara and then Worthington punched him, causing the photographer to have lacerations to his nose," an NYPD spokesperson says. "He has been charged with assault. He punched the photographer." That photographer, by the way, was also arrested on charges of assault, reckless endangerment and harassment.

Twitter

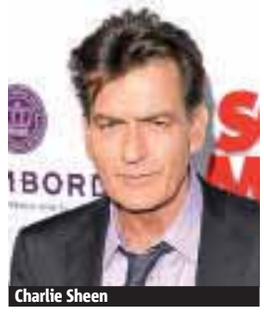
@ElizabethHurley
Uh oh, I just found myself breaking into a Carpenters song. Dogs and birdies horrified.

@EmmaBunton
That's it, I'm going to the gym. Wish me luck, It's been a while!!!



@SarahKSilverman
In a zombie apocalypse the trees win

Charlie's chuffed with new fiancée Brett ... just don't call her a porn star!



Charlie Sheen

Charlie Sheen is excited about starting a life with his new fiancée, Brett Rossi, but he'd be a lot happier if the press would stop calling her a porn star. "It's absolutely making Charlie crazy that the media keeps referring to Brett as a porn star, because she no longer is doing that. She recently graduated from nursing school," a source tells Radar Online. "Furthermore, her stage name is Brett Rossi, her legal name is Scottine Ross. He wants people to refer to her as Scotti, which is the name she goes by in her personal life. Charlie has told his publicist to tell media outlets to stop calling her a porn star."

Kudrow and ex manager not Friends as court case looms

Lisa Kudrow is fighting back against claims by former manager Scott Howard that she owes him a share of her earnings from Friends reruns, according to the Hollywood Reporter. Howard, who is suing Kudrow for $1.7 million US, claims that he and Kudrow had an oral agreement that he would continue to receive a five per cent commission on her Friends earnings even after he was fired in 2007. "I always believed that a personal handshake kind of cemented that personal relationship and that anything more formal felt awkward," Howard testified in court last week. For her part, Kudrow insists she only agreed to pay Howard for the first round of residuals and nothing else.

The Word

Baldwin states his case and writes off the fame game

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

Here is a partial list of things and people Alec Baldwin slammed in New York Magazine on Monday: the paparazzi, homophobes, people who think Alec Baldwin is a homophobe, CSI, a man in Hawaii who answers the phone rudely, Shia LaBeouf, Rachel Maddow, Broadway, New York, America, the world, 2013.

Baldwin has penned a lengthy piece that is purportedly his resignation from public life, but the bulk of it is essentially a rebuttal to everything you've read or heard about him in the past year. Everything, from his failed attempt to costar with Shia LaBeouf on Broadway to his cancelled MSNBC show to allegations that he'd used a gay slur, is addressed and found to be the fault of a vicious paparazzi culture whose main purpose is to make Alec Baldwin look bad.

Baldwin keeps returning to one episode: An incident in 2013 when a photographer tried to take a picture of Baldwin and his baby daughter, and the actor chased him down the street cussing him out. According to TMZ, Baldwin called him a "faggot." Baldwin insists that's not true, but he blames the fact that he's been falsely labelled a homophobe for everything from the cancellation of his MSNBC show (well, he also blames Rachel Maddow for that) to the fact that he probably can't run for mayor of New York now. I would have slightly more sympathy for Baldwin's plight if he hadn't used the word "tranny" in the article. Still, the piece is amusing for exactly the thing Baldwin claims to deplore: celebrity gossip. Shia LaBeouf screamed at him for not knowing his lines! Rachel Maddow viewed him as "equivalent to Mel Gibson!" Juicy, Alec. Tell us more.

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CHEVROLET

What does your achoo say about you?

Is it a cold? Is it allergies? It all depends on how long you've been suffering. ISTOCK

Winter blahs. Spring isn't quite here yet and neither is allergy season but that cold might not be a cold after all

MAJA LUNDAGER PEDERSEN
Metro News in New York City

It's been 14 days and that cold you caught is still hanging on. What do you do? Probably nothing. It's just a cold, right? Actually, you might have an allergy. No, allergies aren't just a spring thing.

"What I tell [patients] is, if it lasts for more than nine days, it's not a cold. It's probably either a sinus infection or an allergy," says Dr. Joan Lehach, an integrative medicine physician specializing in allergy, asthma and clinical immunology at Montefiore Medical Center in New York.

Lehach knows it can be hard to distinguish a cold from allergies. "The things that they have in common are you get congestion, you can get a cough, you can get postnasal drip, you can get a headache. You just feel tired and not well."

But there are other signs that indicate your bug may be an environmental issue, rather than a bacterial one. Typically, you are not going to get a fever with an allergy. Your mucus can be clearer in colour — with colds, sometimes it turns green or yellow. You don't get body aches with an allergy, typically, whereas with a cold you might.

Winter allergies do exist, and if you get sneezy during the spring and summer, chances are you'll be affected in colder months too. Common culprits? "Indoor things like dust mites and mold," Lehach says.

Allergies are not just annoying — they can also lead to sinus infections, which are also similar to colds. Allergies set you up for getting actual colds and viruses because your immune system is stressed.

By paying attention to your nasal health, Lehach says you can reduce your risk of catching a wintertime bug. Follow her advice: "The most important thing you can do — and this applies to colds, flus and allergies — is wash your hands and face.

"Also, if the air is too dry, it sets you up for a dry mucosa with cracks in your nose, so when you are exposed to viruses you are more likely to get infected because you have these microscopic cracks. And if it's too moist you are going to grow the mold and the dust mites and the indoor allergens [that] make your symptoms worse as well.

"Try to keep the humidity in your house around 50 per cent. For five or six bucks you can get this little gadget that will tell you the humidity in your house, and then you can either get a humidifier or a dehumidifier, or do something as simple as putting a pot on the radiator and that moistens the air."

For your phone

Phobia Free (iPad, iPhone; $3.99)

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
life@metronews.ca

This therapy app will help you understand and deal with your arachnophobia through relaxation techniques and a progression of virtual spiders, including one you interact with using your phone's camera.

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We offer everything from 3D imaging to old-world craftmanship
Our products include ...
Quality brand name comfort and walking shoes
We make your feet feel GOOD!
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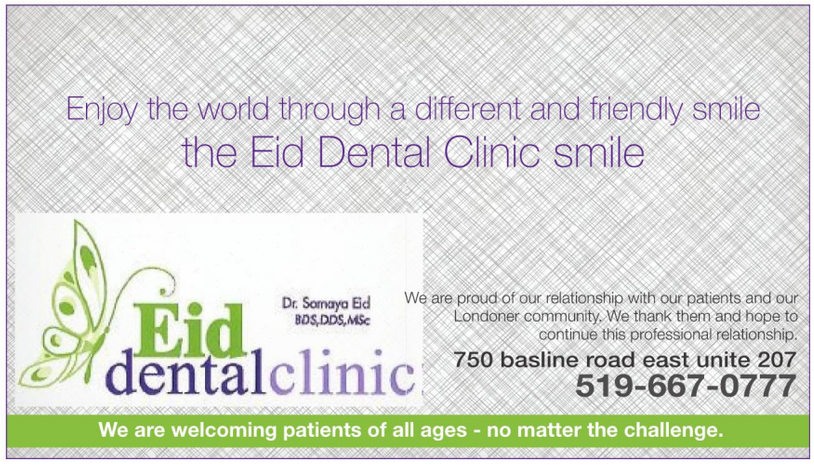
527 Wellington Rd. S., London, ON N6C 4R3 (across from Parkwood Hospital)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the Eid Dental Clinic smile
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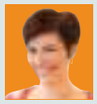
We are welcoming patients of all ages - no matter the challenge.

All pâté roads lead to a simple, red-wine-sipping kind of meal

Health Solutions

Live a little with liver — but only a little



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

If you truly have a cholesterol problem, turn the page. Still reading? OK, but this is the honour system.

Pâté is a French favourite for a few reasons. It is smooth, creamy and intense, and a little goes a long way flavour-wise.

The addition of duck fat, however, makes it out of bounds for many.

Liver itself is quite nourishing. It is rich in Vitamin A, which is great for your eyes (unless you are pregnant, then it can be too high for baby), B12, to help keep heart-disease-causing homocysteine levels low, protein and iron.

Aside from duck fat, there are caveats — and big ones.

Liver is high in cholesterol, which isn't a problem for most. But if your doctor has asked you to avoid it, do so.

In addition, liver is the organ that cleanses the body of all kinds of toxins. Which means, whatever the animal was exposed to can get concentrated in their liver and you would be consuming any manner of pesticide, medication and environmental toxins.

Simple solution? Go organic. Organic chickens are fed organic feed, which reduces their load and, in turn, yours. They are available at health-food stores and well worth the effort. Like, once in a while. Don't be doing this weekly, sheesh.

Trim livers of any fat or other ick and simply pan fry on high heat with garlic and oregano for a traditional Greek treat. It's excellent as an appetizer! Or, bust out the hand blender and puree into pâté.

Either way, classic Mediterranean simplicity is at your finger tips.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

This recipe serves six. COURTESY THERESA ALBERT

THERESA ALBERT
myfriendinfood.com

Traditional pâté is often made with about 50 per cent added saturated fat.

This recipe uses extra virgin olive oil and a little bit of butter but nets a smooth and creamy spread that can be the centrepiece for your next Friday night charcuterie platter.

Spread on veggies, add some hummus and make it a simple, red-wine-sipping kind of meal.

Ingredients

- 1 lb organic chicken livers
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbsp butter, melted and divided
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp thyme
- Black pepper, to taste

1. Clean livers and remove ducts and any fat. Rinse in a colander and place into a large casserole dish.

2. Add remaining ingredients, except pepper, and bake at 300 F for 30 minutes until very firm. Stir once during baking.

3. Allow to cool and use a hand wand to puree well.

4. Using a spatula place into jars, top with ground pepper and drizzle with melted butter. **THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND TORONTO PERSONAL NUTRITIONIST. SHE FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM**

Goat Cheese Phyllo Bites: fancy side of snacks

Ingredients

- 3 packages (each package contains 15 cups) phyllo pastry cups
- 1 1/2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup 1% milk
- 4-oz log soft goat cheese, crumbled
- 1 oz finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
- 1 large egg, separated, plus 1 large egg white, at room temp
- 1 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- Pinch of cream of tartar
- 45 fresh dill, tarragon sprigs

1. Heat the oven to 375 F. Arrange the phyllo cups on a rimmed baking sheet. Set aside.

2. In saucepan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the flour and whisk 2 minutes. Add milk in a stream, whisking, and bring to a boil, whisking. Simmer, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the goat cheese, half of the Parmigiano-Reggiano, egg yolk, mustard and salt and pepper, to taste, stirring until smooth. Set aside.

3. In bowl, use an electric mixer to beat both egg whites until foamy. Add the cream of tartar and continue beating until they just hold stiff peaks. Stir a third of the whites into the sauce, then fold in the remaining whites, gently.

4. Spoon mix into phyllo cups. Bake on the oven's middle shelf until they are puffed and golden, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a platter, sprinkle the tops with the remaining cheese and some herbs, then serve immediately. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

This recipe serves four. MATTHEW MEAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ADVERTISING FEATURE

STAY WELL

It's time for a fresh start! A new year is the time to commit to taking care of yourself so you can take care of the ones you love. It only takes a few minutes each day, and a few simple strategies, to keep you feeling your very best.

USE YOUR BODY

You don't need a gym – or even any free time! – to get in the best shape of your life. Here are three no-equipment-needed moves you can do anywhere. Try them the next time you're waiting for your kids to finish hockey practice or dance lessons. And no matter where – or when – you work out, make sure Tampax Pearl Active is there with you. It keeps you protected so you can keep your mind on your workout, not your period.

1 WALL SIT
Pressing your back against the wall, squat down into a sitting position. Hold for as long as you can. You'll build strong glutes, thighs and calves as you increase your time.

2 ARM CIRCLES
Hold your arms out straight at either side at shoulder level. Alternate rotating your arms in small and large circles, backwards and forwards. You'll build shapely, lean arms and shoulders.

3 SIDE BENDS
Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, your arms over your head and your hands clasped. Bend sideways from the waist, lengthening your arms as you bend. You'll develop your obliques for a strong core.

HEALTHY MOM HAPPY FAMILY

MAKE TOOTH CARE A FAMILY AFFAIR

You make sure your kids floss, brush and rinse regularly, but are you following your own advice? An easy way to get everyone in the habit is to make flossing, brushing and rinsing with Crest Pro-Health products a daily game. You'll be modelling good oral hygiene for your kids, and your smile will be in tip-top shape.

FOR THE KIDS Play a favourite song that's between two and three minutes long and dance along while you brush. Or try Oral-B Deep Sweep 5000 Brush with its cute happy-face timer that ticks down the minutes till you're done.

FOR YOU Protect against plaque and gingivitis, plus fight pesky bad breath, by keeping a small bottle of Crest Pro-Health Multi-Protection Rinse in your purse for after lunch. Add Crest Pro-Health toothpaste and an Oral-B toothbrush, and soon you'll have a great daily habit.

To ensure these products are right for you, read and follow the labels. Crest® Pro-Health Toothpaste fights cavities, plaque, tartar and gingivitis, and treats tooth sensitivity. Crest® Pro-Health Multi-Protection Rinse fights gingivitis. Crest Pro-Health toothpaste is for adults and children 12 years and older. Crest Pro-Health Stages toothpaste fights cavities. Oral-B power toothbrushes are for ages 3+.

JUICE UP!

Juice is a terrific source of antioxidants and vitamins, but it usually lacks pulp, so it's low in fibre.[1] Want to give your morning juice or smoothie a tasty fibre boost? Add a dose of Metamucil. It dissolves best in cool liquids and tastes so good you'd never suspect it promotes digestive health[2] and helps lower cholesterol levels[3] to promote heart health. Orange and Pink Lemonade flavours brighten up tangy grapefruit juice, and Berry Blast flavour gives an extra zing to blueberry-pomegranate juice.

To ensure this product is right for you, always read and follow the label.
1-Source: http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/juicing/AN02107. 2-By relieving irregularity.
3-Lowers mildly to moderately elevated cholesterol levels when taken with a low fat diet.

GET LOST, COLDS AND FLUS!

You're worried that your kids are packing a little something extr in their backpacks. But you could be the one bringing germs home without knowing it.

Studies have shown that public bathrooms and restaurants aren't the germiest places. Surprisingly, it's humble grocery carts that take the top prize. Upwards of 72% of cart handles have bacteria and those nasty bugs.

Always wash your hands well after touching a grocery-cart handle. Scrub as long as a rendition of "Happy Birthday." Alcohol-based hand sanitizer can help reduce the bacteria on your hands when hand washing is not an option. If you do end up with a cold, DayQuil and NyQuil can help you get back on your feet and feel better fast.

To ensure this product is right for you, always read and follow the label. Vicks DayQuil Cold & Flu relieves fever, headache, cough and nasal congestion. Vicks NyQuil Cold & Flu relieves fever, headache, cough and runny nose.

GO ONLINE FOR MORE HELPFUL TIPS

To get your year off to a fresh start, go online for more tips designed for busy moms. Go to **www.staywellmom.ca.**

3 BENEFITS. 1 MULTIHEALTH FIBRE.

- ✓ **Helps lower cholesterol levels* to promote heart health**
- ✓ **Promotes digestive health****
- ✓ **Boosts daily fibre intake**

*Lowers mildly to moderately elevated cholesterol levels when taken with a low-fat diet

** By relieving irregularity

To ensure this product is right for you, always read and follow the label.

† Source Healthcare Analytics, 2012. © 2014 P&G

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2013 contribution deadline looms

Last-minute tips. You have until March 3 to deposit money into retirement savings fund

YLVA VAN BUUREN
For Metro

March 3 is the deadline to contribute to your RRSP for the 2013 financial year. VLADIMIR GJORGIEV/SHUTTERSTOCK

The deadline for making your RRSP contribution is approaching, but there is still time to contribute.

Check the bottom of your 2012 notice of assessment to see how much contribution room you have accumulated (any unused room is carried forward and the total unused balanced will be shown there). Canadians can contribute up to 18 per cent of earned income to the maximum room, which is $23,820 for 2013.

Here are some last-minute contribution tips.

• Mark March 3 on your calendar — that's the cut-off date for 2013 contributions. Most financial institutions are open later and on weekends to accommodate the last-minute rush. Or contribute via Internet banking.

• Don't over-think it. If you need help deciding where to put your RRSP contribution, just put it into a high-interest savings account or a low-risk money market mutual fund, says Christopher Dewdney, a Toronto financial adviser and member of Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada. "It doesn't matter where it's goes just as long as it's registered. You'll receive a tax deduction and can create a properly allocated and well diversified portfolio at a later date."

• Use money from your tax-free savings account (TFSA). "If you need a tax deduction and you don't have access to cash but you do have money in a TFSA, move the money from your TFSA into your RRSP." With the TFSA, you can use that room again beginning January of the following year.

• Take out an RRSP catch-up loan. All financial institutions offer these loans, which allow you to borrow money for your RRSP. Keep in mind that if the loan is over too long a period, you could offset the gains (tax deduction) you get with the RRSP, Dewdney said.

• If your income was lower than previous years and you might not need the RRSP deduction, it's still a good idea to contribute, Dewdney said. "You can always defer the contribution to a future year if that will be more beneficial."

• For next year. Set up a systematic contribution plan now and you will be off to a good start for next year. "Even if you want to make a larger contribution come tax time, you'll already have a base," Dewdney said.

Get your investment questions answered with a Scotiabank® Second Opinion.

Over two-thirds of Canadians have concerns about not having enough money for retirement.[1] A Scotiabank Second Opinion can give you peace of mind and help make sure your financial goals are achieved.

Have your investment questions answered. Even the ones you haven't asked yet. Come in for a free, no-obligation review today.

Talk to a Scotiabank advisor or visit www.scotiabank.com/secondopinion.

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[1] Scotiabank 2012 Investment Poll, Canadians Saving and Investing Attitudes & Behaviours, conducted by Harris/Decima, November/December 2012.

Impact. Divorce can split assets

TALBOT BOGGS
Smart Investing

A couple's RRSPs often are split during a divorce. AUREMAR/SHUTTERSTOCK

Going through a divorce is difficult at any age, but grey divorces involving couples 50 years or older can have a major impact on their retirement plans and assets like an RRSP.

A recent study by Winnipeg-based Investors Group found that about 80 per cent of grey divorcees say they will probably delay their retirement because they need to work longer than planned and 62 per cent said their post-divorce savings and investments will no longer be adequate to fund their retirement.

"In a divorce you might feel emotionally liberated but financially you could be a lot worse off," said Chris Buttigieg, senior manager, wealth planning strategy with BMO Financial Group. "Divorce poses some really challenges for people when retirement is around the corner."

In case of separation or divorce, either you or your spouse can transfer existing RRSPs to the other without being subject to tax provided you are living apart when property and assets are settled and provided you have a written separation agreement or a court order.

A couple's RRSPs often are split between partners during a divorce, but a lot of what happens will depend on the terms of the settlement.

Attribution rules (tax rules to prevent excess income splitting) regarding spousal RRSP and RRIF (registered retirement income fund) withdrawals will not apply to any withdrawals made after you and your spouse have begun to live separately and apart. Your soon-to-be-ex can continue to make spousal RRSP contributions to your spousal RRSP until the date you cease to be spouses, or the date of divorce.

"Women tend to have more attachment to the home but liquid assets tend to go the other spouse," Buttigieg said. "In cases like these there's a danger of becoming house rich and cash poor and finding yourself in the situation of wondering how you're going to carry the house and expenses."

One of the big problems with divorce is that it is often a bitter experience, which can affect your judgment.

The Investors Group study found that people who characterized their divorce as bitter experienced greater financial difficulties than those whose divorce was more cordial, such as managing living expenses after the divorce or separation, stress from the division of assets, the cost of divorce proceedings and no longer having enough retirement savings.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TALBOT BOGGS IS A TORONTO-BASED BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONAL WHO HAS WORKED WITH NATIONAL NEWS ORGANIZATIONS, MAGAZINES AND CORPORATIONS IN THE FINANCE, RETAIL, MANUFACTURING AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL SECTORS.

CFL

Higgins gets call to take Alouettes into new era

For a second year in a row, the Montreal Alouettes will start the CFL season with a new head coach.

Alouettes owner Bob Wetenhall announced Monday that Tom Higgins will be the club's new head coach.

The former Edmonton Eskimos and Calgary Stampeders bench boss replaces general manager Jim Popp, who took over on Aug. 1 when the inexperienced Dan Hawkins was fired only five games into the 2013 season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

Tigers add seven contracts for upcoming season

The Detroit Tigers agreed to terms Monday with seven players on contracts for the 2014 season.

Detroit announced agreements with right-handers Jose Ortega, Luke Putkonen and Evan Reed, left-handers Kyle Lobstein and Drew Smyly, infielder Nick Castellanos and outfielder Steven Moya. Smyly is expected to move into the rotation after an impressive 2013 showing in the bullpen. Castellanos has been considered one of the organization's top prospects and will likely play third base this year in the majors.

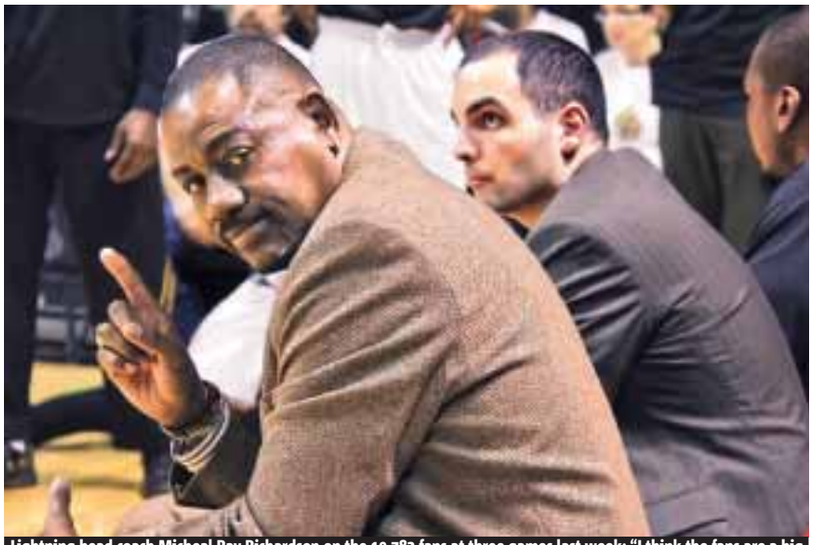
The Tigers now have 32 players on the club's 40-man roster under contract for 2014.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A's to be the enemy in upcoming days

NBL Canada. Lightning to face Brampton in Round 1, but who will have home-court edge is yet to be determined

DAVE LANGFORD
dave.langford@metronews.ca



Lightning head coach Micheal Ray Richardson on the 19,783 fans at three games last week: "I think the fans are a big boost for us ... it's just unbelievable. Big-time basketball." ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

The London Lightning will face the Brampton A's in the National Basketball League of Canada best-of-five conference semifinal.

We know that much as the league enters the final week of the regular season.

But who will end up second is the next critical piece of the pie and that determines where and when those games will be.

"Whatever happens, happens. We'll be ready," Lightning head coach Micheal Ray Richardson said after practice Monday.

Much of the battle-for-second-place action belongs to the A's who now own that spot with four games to be played in five days this week, ending with a Brampton home game Friday night against London.

The A's are now 24-13 after defeating The Island Storm 118-108 Monday in Brampton. They also have a "home" game in Orangeville on Tuesday against first-place Windsor and a road game Thursday in Mississauga before the London game.

The Lightning (23-16) have only the Friday matchup left in their 40-game schedule.

London general manager Taylor Brown said his team has a 38-point differential over Brampton in games between the teams and that would be the tiebreaker should the two teams have the same record after Friday.

If London finishes in second

- **Game 1:** March 4, Budweiser Gardens
  Game 2: March 5, in London
  Game 3: March 8, at Brampton
  Game 4 (if necessary): March 10 at Orangeville
  Game 5 (if necessary): March 13, in London

If London finishes third

- **Game 1:** March 2 at Brampton
  Game 2: March 5 in London
  Game 3: March 8 at Brampton
  Game 4 (if necessary): March 13, in London
  Game 5 (if necessary): March 15, at Brampton

If London finishes second, the Lightning would open at home on Tuesday, March 4, at Budweiser Gardens with a game the next night, also at home.

Place third and the Lightning would play Game 1 in Brampton on March 2 and Game 2 at the Budweiser Gardens on March 5.

"I feel if we go into the playoffs playing the way we are now, we'll be able to compete with anybody," Lightning assistant general manager DeAnthony Bowden said.

Richardson said the timing is right after the Lightning swept three home games in the last week, with a total attendance of 19,783 including a record crowd of 7,396 on Family Day.

"This is the right time for us to get everybody in synch," he said. "Now, we're going into the playoffs, we want to be playing our best basketball."

Can Canada keep the gold times rolling?

Slopestyle skiing gold medallist Dara Howell from Huntsville is welcomed back to Canada by family members in Toronto Monday. CHRIS YOUNG/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canada's Olympic team in Sochi benefited from the afterburn of hosting the previous Winter Games in 2010.

It's a trend, although not a given, that the home country of an Olympic Games can parlay the momentum for another quadrennial or two because of a high-revving sports system.

Canada won 25 medals in Sochi after a total of 26 in Vancouver in 2010.

The Canadian team finished third in overall medals and first in gold four years ago. In Sochi, the final tally was good for fourth overall and third in gold.

Hosting a Games made Canada a winter sport power, but can it last to 2018 and beyond?

"I think it's sustainable," said Steve Podborski, Canada's chef de mission in Sochi. "It's really, really fun to be good at something."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hosts' right to boast

- China was second with 100 medals at the 2008 Beijing Games and second with 88 in London in 2012.
- The U.S. has cracked the top three in the Winter Games medal count since hosting in 2002.
- Australia hit a high of 50 medals in Athens after Sydney had the Games in 2000, but fell to 35 in London.

4 SPORTS

Man with the golden touch

Sidney Crosby's career features numerous highlight-reel goals. Here's a look at five that may rank among his best.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
Photos by Getty Images

Welcome back, Sid

The goal Crosby scored against the Islanders in November 2011, in his first game back from a long concussion layoff. Crosby broke through the Islanders defence and tucked a backhander top shelf, one of his fave moves.

Winter Classic shootout

You can hear Crosby yelling his familiar "wooooooo" as he beat Sabres goalie Ryan Miller in the shootout to end a thrilling Winter Classic game in Buffalo in 2008.

Premiere of the Crosby Show

This one came against the Canadiens in November 2005 and was one of the goals that started the legend. To end a shootout, Crosby did his little leg kick fake, then went backhand roof past a helpless Jose Theodore. For good measure, the puck knocked the water bottle off the top of the net.

Sochi Olympics

This was Crosby's latest thriller, and it carries more weight than first meets the eye. Another deke backhander, it broke Sweden's hopes and essentially propelled Canada to a second consecutive gold medal.

Golden goal in Vancouver

You can hear Crosby shout to Jarome Iginla for a feed as he bolted to the net from the corner. Miller was the victim again as Crosby won the gold medal for Canada. The goal ranks up there with the most famous in international competition for Canada.

NHL

Sabres still dangling Miller on trade market

A person familiar with discussions has told The Associated Press that Buffalo Sabres GM Tim Murray continues to pursue offers for goalie Ryan Miller with the intention of dealing him before the NHL trade deadline on March 5.

The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because Murray did not speak to reporters Monday.

The person said the team's first option is trading Miller, who is in the final year of his contract. Option No. 2 would be making a bid to re-sign Miller if a trade can't be completed.

Miller was a no-show at Sabres practice Monday because the United States' backup goalie was travelling from the Sochi Games.

Miller was scheduled to arrive later in the day.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

X-rays show Stamkos not well enough to play

Injured Tampa Bay Lightning star Steven Stamkos is recovering, but not ready yet to return to the lineup.

Stamkos is sitting out a four-game post-Olympic trip that starts Thursday at Nashville.

Stamkos underwent X-rays on Monday that revealed that his broken right shin, which has sidelined him since November, is improving but not enough for him to be cleared to play in games.

Steven Stamkos
THE CANADIAN PRESS

The centre will travel with the team to continue practising, and is expected to be examined again when the Lightning return for a homestand that begins March 6 against Buffalo.

Stamkos was injured on Nov. 11 at Boston and underwent surgery. He has 14 goals and 23 points in 17 games this season. The injury kept Stamkos from playing for Canada in the Sochi Olympics.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

Trout's contract talks won't slow big fish: Manager

Angels manager Mike Scioscia said Monday that he isn't worried about possible contract talks becoming a distraction for star centre-fielder Mike Trout.

"It's not an issue and it's certainly not an issue with Mike," Scioscia said.

Published reports have said the team and Trout are discussing a long-term deal.

Scioscia said he hasn't seen a contract becoming a problem in his time with the Angels.

"We haven't had anybody here in 15 years because of a contract situation that hasn't come out and given 100 per cent," Scioscia told reporters.

Scioscia said his training camps are "high energy" and designed to keep players focused. He added that distractions can come in many forms and pointed out that Trout has handled distractions easily through two seasons with the Angels.

In two seasons, Trout has won the American League Rookie of the Year award and was twice the runner-up for AL Most Valuable Player.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Collins among old pals in return with Nets

NBA. Openly gay player playing alongside many former teammates with a 10-day contract in tow

Jason Collins has a week and a half to prove himself to the Brooklyn Nets.

He signed a 10-day contract, one of the toughest deals in sports because it gives non-superstars almost no time to impress their coaches and teammates in hopes of sticking around.

With this group, Collins did that long ago: The Nets locker-room is filled with former teammates who have already accepted the league's first openly gay player and his on-court habits, which are the ones that matter most to them.

"Guys already know what ... to expect from me. It's like, OK, he's not going to magically have a 40-inch vertical (leap) and shoot threes," Collins said.

That made it the ideal place for his historic return to the NBA.

Perhaps, as numerous players insisted after Collins came out in a Sports Illustrated article last April, athletes were ready to accept a gay teammate. Maybe Collins would have been welcomed anywhere he signed.

But maybe not. As the bullying scandal involving the Miami Dolphins proved, the locker-room can be a place where abusive language can divide a team and threaten to derail a season, to say nothing of the fallout for the players themselves.

The loudest voices with the Nets, however, belong to the team leaders, and they've already made up their mind about Collins.

Old teammate Jason Kidd coaches the team. Collins played with Joe Johnson in Atlanta and Kevin Garnett and Paul Pierce in Boston, and they are now the respected veterans in Brooklyn.

Collins played six and a half years with the Nets, who he helped reach the NBA Finals with Kidd in 2002 and 2003. One of his first calls when he came out last April was to Kidd.

"You look at all the connections that Jason has and also being that he played with the Nets before, so I think this is a great opportunity for him," Kidd said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jason Collins made his return to the NBA on Sunday night playing for the Nets against the Lakers in Los Angeles. JEFF GROSS/GETTY IMAGES

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
There are a number of things you need to get rid of, things that are stopping you from realizing your potential. You know what they are and you know they must go. Now is the time put the past behind you.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You need to find ways to further your ambitions while not appearing too selfish. This is a time of great opportunity. Stay calm, stay focused and, above all, stay the course.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You are going to have to make a difficult choice and what you decide will affect your life for years to come. Only you can make this choice but it's got to be one thing or the other. The worst choice is no choice at all.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
The Sun in Pisces boosts your confidence and make it easier to take chances. Not that you should push your luck at every opportunity but you do need to be a bit more adventurous.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
One of your more impulsive moods could lead to something good . . . or something bad. You will get into risky situations – the sort you like best – but you know how to get out of them too.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Because the approaching new moon falls in the partnership sector of your chart you will find it easier to identify with and sympathize with other people's worries. Help them if you can but don't let their worries rub off on you.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Take care you don't get too close to a situation and lose your sense of perspective. You need to make a conscious decision to stand back from what you are doing and see the bigger picture.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Put your own interests first and start work on something you have been thinking about for months. This is an excellent day for creative activities, so put your doubts behind you and follow your dream.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If a loved one demands more independence you must give it to them. You should know by now that the harder you try to control other people the more it hurts when they finally break away.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You will get a lot out of social activities today, so make the effort to get out into the world. The more you engage with people the more you will see how similar we all are.

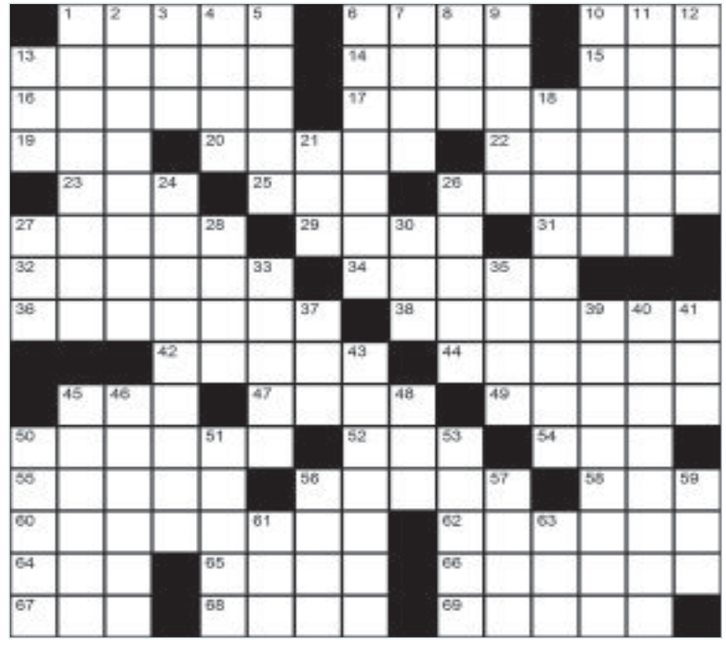
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you want something enough you will find a way to get it, no matter how many obstacles are placed in your path. Whatever challenges you face you are big enough and tough enough to deal with them.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Success is yours if you want it enough, so do you? Pisces is often a laid back sort of sign, so maybe you are happy taking each day as it comes. If so, that's okay – you are who you are. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



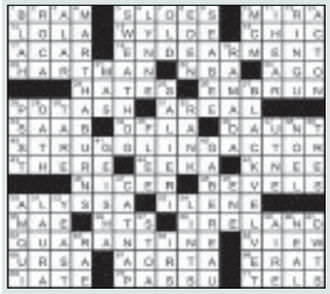
Across

1. Nary _ __ (Nobody)
6. Bible boy
10. Ms. Gardner
13. Refinement
14. Taj Mahal's site
15. Vancouver-born actor Mr. Bellows
16. Manitoba: __. __ Provincial Park
17. Oscars: 2014 Best Original Song nominee "Happy" by __ Williams
19. URL ending
20. Singer Ms. Baker
22. Choreographer Mr. Terrio
23. E-Mail sending acronym
25. Santa __, California
26. Pamper
27. Tidal bore
29. "Sand in My Shoes" singer
31. Coral reef
32. Great Pyramid of Giza commissioning Pharaoh
34. Sally Field's Oscar-winning role, __ Rae
36. 1998 Barenaked Ladies chart-topper: 2 wds.
38. Rumour
42. Mister, in Madrid
44. Little wave
45. Is able to
47. United __ Emirates
49. Reservations
50. Least wild
52. Global currency org.
54. Green Day drummer, __ Cool
55. Stevie Wonder's "_ __ Called to Say I Love You"
56. Cherish
58. "The Age of Innocence" (1993) actress ...her initials-sharers
60. Laurentian locale, Saint-__
62. Reverberations
64. French article
65. Marvel Comics superhero
66. Flunky
67. Bottom-of-letter letters
68. Articulates
69. 1953 John Wayne movie

Down

1. German highway
2. Robert Service poem, The Cremation of __ __
3. __ _ whim
4. Calif. campus
5. British singer Ms. Lewis
6. 2014 Best Picture nominee, "__ Phillips"
7. Turkish official or military title
8. Mr. Gershwin
9. Elaine __ ("Taxi" role for Marilu Henner)
10. Schedule
11. In a despicable manner
12. Festive song: "O Come, __ __ Faithful"
13. White House defence advisory gr.
18. Locale of pre-Oscars telecast action: 2 wds.
21. Polit. designation
24. __ Pass (Alberta community in The Rockies)
26. Apples gadget
27. Green
28. Sword sort
30. Play-__
33. La Chambre Rouge occupant, __ du Canada
35. But: French
37. North or South country [abbr.]
39. BC mining community
40. Other self: 2 wds.
41. Thumbs-up
43. Invading ilks
45. Descendants of Acadians in Louisiana
46. Makes funny
48. Canuck financial inst.
50. Standstill
51. Sporty figures
53. New
56. Skipper's salute
57. Prefix meaning 'Outer'
59. Compass dir.
61. "__-ching!"
63. Distinguished [abbr.]

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku

6	7	3	8	4	9	1	2	5
2	8	5	1	7	6	4	9	3
1	9	4	2	3	5	8	7	6
5	2	7	3	8	4	6	1	9
4	6	9	5	2	1	3	8	7
3	1	8	9	6	7	5	4	2
9	4	6	7	5	8	2	3	1
7	5	2	4	1	3	9	6	8
8	3	1	6	9	2	7	5	4

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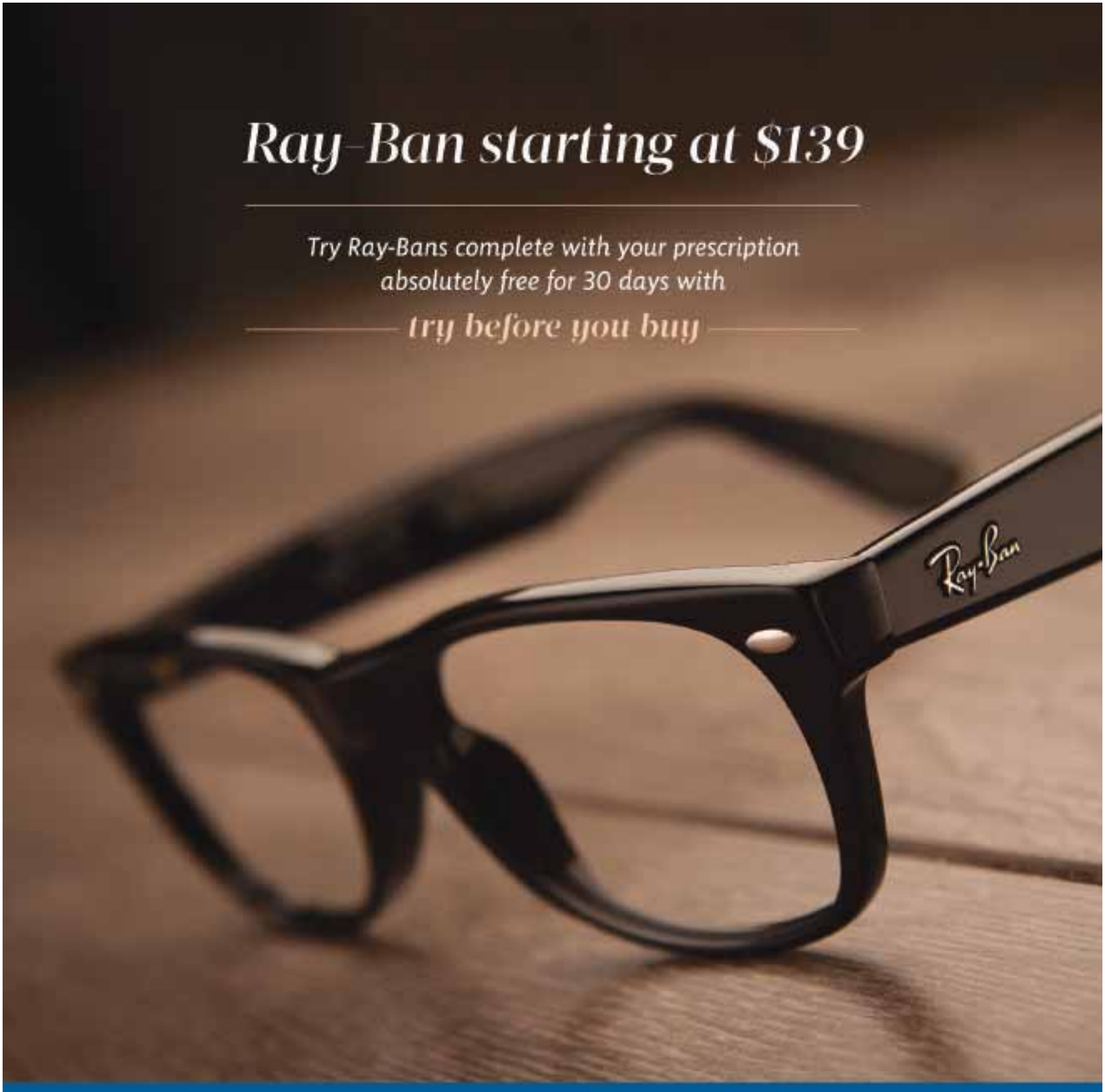
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